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THE ADDRESS OF THE PHILOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
ON THE STUDY OF GREEK IN
THE SCHOOLS

The Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies, appointed by the National Educational Association in 1892, made their report in December, 1893. This document is of course well-known to our readers. One important item in the report, however, which was hardly noticed in the earlier discussions and was wisely kept in the background in the report itself, has now been brought to the front by the American Philological Association. The report proposes four programmes of studies for secondary schools, one of which—the only one containing any Greek at all—is called the “Classical Programme.” This allows only two years to Greek, except for schools which may add a third year to be taken from the regular allowance made to French or German. The whole weight of the committee’s influence is therefore given to a two year’s course in Greek as the regular preparation for college. The American Philological Association, in December, 1894, passed a resolution protesting against the proposed reduction of the preparatory course in Greek, and appointed a committee of twelve to give effect to this action. This committee have published an address, which we print in full, appealing to all friends of sound learning to unite with them in opposing the “Classical Programme,” of the Committee of Ten. They have also invited a large number of others, distinguished by their services to education, to join in this appeal; and their names are added to the address. These names show the deep interest in this important question which is felt by scholars in all parts of the country, and not alone by teachers of Greek. Among the signers we find one of the Committee of Ten; and it is understood that several other members of that committee have expressed their sympathy with the movement.

The resolution of the Philological Association was unanimously approved by the large Classical Conference recently held at

Ann Arbor, and was re-affirmed by the Association itself at its meeting at Cleveland in July. A vote of the Association, taken by post-cards, has shown that only an insignificant minority of that body are opposed to the address or even doubt its expediency.

ADDRESS OF THE COMMITTEE OF TWELVE,
JUNE, JULY, 1895

*To Teachers of the Classics and to all Friends of Sound
Learning in the United States :*

The American Philological Association, at a large meeting held in Philadelphia, Dec. 28, 1894, unanimously adopted the following resolution, proposed by Professor Hale, of Chicago :

Resolved, That, in the opinion of the American Philological Association, in any programme designed to prepare students for the classical course, not less than three years of instruction in Greek should be required.

The undersigned members of the Association were appointed a committee to give effect to this resolution.

The resolution expresses the opinion of the Association, that every school which prepares pupils for what is known as "the classical course" in many colleges, or pupils who intend to study the classics in any college, should provide a course of at least three years' instruction in Greek, which all such pupils are expected to follow. In the judgment of the most experienced teachers, three years is the shortest time in which the preparatory course now offered by our best schools in the reading of simple Attic prose and of Homer or Herodotus (or both), in the essentials of Greek Grammar, and in the elements of Greek Composition, can be properly accomplished. This resolution, it will be seen, concerns itself only with courses of study which profess to be "classical." It does not imply that any school may not prepare pupils for courses not so described, in the case of colleges which admit such students with a shorter term and a smaller amount of study in Greek.

The immediate occasion of this resolution was the proposal made to various associations of teachers to recommend to the

schools and colleges which they represent the adoption of the four programmes recently submitted by the "Committee of Ten" as providing adequate preparation in all lines of study for the colleges and scientific schools of the United States. Only one of these four programmes includes Greek at all, and this is styled the "Classical Programme"; its general adoption would therefore do much to fix the standard of preparation in classics for all our colleges. This so-called "Classical Programme" provides that Greek shall normally begin in the *third year* of the four years' preparatory course, and that only two years shall be given to it. It is true that in certain exceptional cases (mentioned in a foot-note) schools may "substitute" Greek for German or French in the second year; but this substitution is evidently not what the authors of the programme desire or expect, or they would have made this the regular, and not the exceptional, arrangement. Nothing can be more obvious than the deliberate intention of the "Committee of Ten" (at least of those members who accept the report in full) to confine Greek to the last two years of preparation for college, and gradually to establish two years as the maximum of time which even the best schools will regularly give to that language.

It is of the highest importance that all classical teachers in both schools and colleges, and all who have the direction of schools in which classical students are prepared for college, should understand what this "Classical Programme" means. It means that the standard of preparation in Greek for our colleges is to be lowered to what has been known as the "elementary Greek" or the "minimum Greek" in elective schemes of admission; in other words, that there is to be no systematic study of Homer or Herodotus or of Greek Composition in even our best schools; and that no provision is to be regularly made, even for pupils who show special aptitude for classical study, to advance beyond the merest elements in Greek. It means that our schools are seriously advised to adopt a course of study which now would not admit their pupils at all to any first-class college having fixed requisites for admission, and

would not admit them to any of the Freshman Greek courses which are regularly taken by classical students and are necessary to prepare them for the higher courses in any college having elective requisites for admission. The scheme is therefore unintelligible unless it anticipates a reduction of the grade of all the regular Greek courses in the colleges, so that the work now done in the last year of school shall become the ordinary work of the first year in college, with a corresponding reduction of all the higher work. There is no escape from this alternative ; either the schools which adopt this "Classical Programme" must cease to prepare pupils for the ordinary classical courses in our colleges, or the colleges must lower their standard in Greek by a whole year to suit such schools. Either of these results would be disastrous ; and we can hardly believe that either of them, with all its consequences, was seriously contemplated by the framers of the proposed programme.

The bad effects just indicated would not be confined to the classical courses in college. The importance of Greek to students who intend to devote themselves to the study of English or any other modern language, whether from the literary or the philological point of view, has never been denied in Europe, and is not denied by any competent American scholar in these departments of learning. For students specially interested in English literature, for example, to enter college with no knowledge of Homer, under the impression that their time has been spent to the best advantage in the preparatory school, would be a grave error. For such students to be forced to begin their acquaintance with Greek literature in the Freshman year would seriously cripple their work in their chosen department. And this would be the result if the programme in question were adopted ; for it is not till he reaches Homer or Herodotus that a boy begins to understand that in studying Greek he is dealing with a great literature. The elementary or minimum Greek generally does not acquaint him with literary material that appeals to him. These objections apply with equal force to stu-

dents who intend to make a special study of the literary history of any modern tongue.

The department of Theology would feel the proposed reduction of Greek as a severe blow. It is difficult now for Theological Schools to require of their students such a knowledge of Greek as is necessary for the study of the New Testament ; the discouragement which would result from this plan would aggravate this evil immensely, and would be felt in every School of Theology in the country.

This "Classical Programme" is exceedingly liberal to all departments except the classics. It requires four years' study of English, and provides for three of History, three of German or French, and four of Mathematics (including Trigonometry and Higher Algebra). In these studies, therefore, pupils might be carried a year beyond the ordinary requisites for admission to most colleges, while in Greek they would fall short of these requisites by just a year, so that Greek would be degraded relatively by two years. It is well known that there is a vigorous and increasing demand for putting back either Geometry or Algebra and a modern language into the Grammar Schools ; and this has actually been done in some important schools. The pressure of other studies in the High Schools—the only excuse which is made for depriving Greek of a year—is, therefore, likely to be temporary, while the reduction of Greek to two years, if once accepted, will be permanent.

The "Committee of Ten" asked and received the advice of nine conferences, composed of experts in nine departments of study, and they justly attribute great weight to the careful judgments of these conferences, which give the proposals of the committee their chief authority in matters of detail. It may surprise many to learn that the Greek conference introduced its recommendations with the following general statement :

"The Conference recommends that the study of Greek be begun *at least three years* before the close of the course preparatory to college."

This primary recommendation, which is the basis of the

whole report of the Greek Conference, is set aside by the "Committee of Ten" almost without consideration. This is, we believe, the only case in which the decided opinion of one of the Conferences, on such a fundamental matter, has been so summarily rejected. It is true that other studies are not allowed by the committee all the increase which they desire; but Greek alone is to be reduced and crippled. The resolution of the Philological Association is simply an appeal from the decision of the committee to the judgment of the experts who advised the committee. The unanimous and enthusiastic approval of the action of the Philological Association expressed by the large Classical Conference recently held at Ann Arbor shows that scholars in the West are in perfect harmony with their colleagues in the East on this important subject.

The plan of the Committee, if adopted, would aggravate most unnecessarily one of the greatest evils in our system of education,—that the colleges are compelled to do work which belongs to the schools, and which in most other countries is done by the schools with much greater efficiency and at much less cost. This evil is acknowledged and deplored by all; and yet the colleges are to be asked to lower their standard of classical scholarship that they may assume a new burden of elementary work, which the schools are now doing with ever increasing efficiency. On the other hand, the loss of this work would be seriously felt in the schools. Every step which limits the range and quality of study in school increases the difficulty of obtaining and keeping able and enthusiastic teachers, and nothing attracts men of taste and cultivation to teach in a classical school more than the literary work of the higher classes in Greek.

The undersigned believe that both colleges and schools have a common interest in opposing a scheme which threatens to degrade them both at the expense of good scholarship. They therefore appeal earnestly to all who have the interests of sound learning at heart to unite with them in opposing the introduction of the so-called "Classical Programme" of the "Committee of Ten" into the schools of the United States.

William W. Goodwin, Professor of Greek, Harvard University, Chairman.
 Cecil F. P. Bancroft, Principal of Phillips Andover Academy.
 Franklin Carter, President of Williams College.
 William G. Hale, Professor of Latin, University of Chicago.
 William R. Harper, President of the University of Chicago.
 Francis W. Kelsey, Professor of Latin, University of Michigan.
 George L. Kittredge, Professor of English, Harvard University.
 Abby Leach, Professor of Greek, Vassar College.
 Thomas D. Seymour, Professor of Greek, Yale University.
 Charles F. Smith, Professor of Greek, University of Wisconsin.
 Minton Warren, Professor of Latin, Johns Hopkins University.
 Andrew F. West, Professor of Latin, Princeton University.

The undersigned, not members of the American Philological Association, approve the position taken by the Association in the resolution of December 28, 1894, and unite with the Committee in their appeal, as expressed in the final paragraph of the accompanying address :

Harlan P. Amen, Principal of Phillips Exeter Academy.
 J. W. Bashford, President of Ohio Wesleyan University.
 John Binney, Professor of Hebrew, etc., in the Berkeley Divinity School, Middletown, Conn.
 J. J. Blaisdell, Professor of Philosophy, Beloit College.
 Richard G. Boone, Principal of Michigan State Normal School, Ypsilanti.
 C. F. Brackett, Professor of Physics, Princeton College.
 James Davie Butler, LL. D., Madison, Wisconsin.
 Francis J. Child, Professor of English, Harvard University.
 Joseph H. Coit, Rector of St. Paul's School, Concord, N. H.
 William C. Collar, Head Master of Roxbury Latin School.
 E. C. Coulter, Head Master of the University School, Chicago.
 T. F. Crane, Professor of Romance Languages, Cornell University.
 N. C. Dougherty, Superintendent of Schools, Peoria, Ill. ; President of the National Education Association ; Secretary of the National Council of Education.
 Timothy Dwight, President of Yale University.
 Edward D. Eaton, President of Beloit College.
 Wilson Farrand, Master in Newark Academy.
 J. W. Fairbanks, Principal of Smith Academy, Washington University St. Louis.
 J. H. Freeman, Superintendent of East-side Schools, Aurora, Ill.
 George S. Fullerton, Vice-Provost of University of Pennsylvania.
 Merrill Edwards Gates, President of Amherst College.
 John C. Grant, Principal of the Harvard School, Chicago.
 Francis B. Gummere, Professor of English, Haverford College.

- Thomas S. Hastings, President of Union Theological Seminary, New York.
- James T. Hatfield, Professor of German, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill.
- B. A. Hinsdale, Professor of Teaching, University of Michigan.
- Ashley D. Hurt, Tulane University of Louisiana.
- William DeWitt Hyde, President of Bowdoin College.
- Julia J. Irvine, President of Wellesley College.
- John J. Keane, Rector of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D. C.
- George Trumbull Ladd, Professor of Philosophy, Yale University.
- Moses Merrill, Head Master of Public Latin School, Boston.
- Richard A. Minkwitz, Instructor in High School, Kansas City.
- Hubert A. Newton, Professor of Mathematics, Yale University.
- A. F. Nightingale, Superintendent of High Schools, Chicago.
- George W. C. Noble, Head Master of Private School, Boston.
- Francis L. Patton, President of Princeton College.
- Henry R. Pattengill, Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan.
- Endicott Peabody, Head Master of Groton School.
- Oscar D. Robinson, Principal of High School, Albany; a member of the "Committee of Ten."
- Austin Scott, President of Rutgers College.
- William H. Smiley, Principal of High School, Denver.
- Egbert C. Smyth, Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Andover.
- William Greenough Thayer, Head Master St. Mark's School, Southborough, Mass.
- Charles S. Thornton, Member of the Illinois State Board of Education and of the Chicago Board of Education.
- C. H. Thurber, Principal of Colgate Academy, Hamilton, N. Y.
- Charles F. Thwing, President of Western Reserve University.
- C. O. Whitman, Head Professor of Zoölogy, University of Chicago.
- Josiah D. Whitney, Professor of Geology, Harvard University.
- Talcott Williams, Editor of "The Press," Philadelphia.
- George E. Woodberry, Professor of Literature, Columbia College.
- C. A. Young, Professor of Astronomy, Princeton College.